

**John Blair to George Washington, May 24, 1758, Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers. Published by the Society of the Colonial Dames of America. Edited by Stanislaus Murray Hamilton.**

**FROM THE HONORABLE PRESIDENT BLAIR.**

WILLIAMSBURG May 24th. 1758

SIR

The distresses in Bedford and Halifax had occasioned my Calling a full Council to meet on the 19th. Instt. which obliged Col: Maury to a long attendance here, in which time Jenkins brot. me yours of May 10th. with the Opinion of your Council of Officers on your Necessity of imploying the £400—sent you for Contingencies in the recruiting Service; and the utter insufficiency of that, to discharge your Engagements. Being under Difficultys about it, I kept him several days 'till the Council; who did not apprehend you was warranted to give more than £5—bounty Money, for the Recruits of your Regiment; and yet I cannot see how it could at this time be expected, while we were giving Ten pounds for the other. Be that as it will, we determined to send you a Supply of Money; and I sent presently to the Treasury for £1000—for you. But to my great surprise Mr. Cock whom I expected to deliver it out) was gone out of Town. As I had kept Jenkins 'till then, it vexed me heartily to find a further delay. I first endeavoured to get it from the Gentln. Signers here, but the Attorney was gone too, who should have signed Mr. Nicholas's Book. I then thought to send express to the Speaker, and writ for an Order to some Gentn. here but hearing that Mr. Cock had the Key with him I sent an Express to him at Colo. William Randolphs, and got him to Town last Night, and at last got the money this Morning, as I thought it

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vain to send him up without it.<sup>1</sup> During this delay, I received a Letter from Govr. Sharp, acquainting me that his Assembly had broke up without so much as paying the arrears of their Men from the 8th. of Octo. Last. He purposes, if we are in want, to offer some of his, on terms of your paying their Arrears, which he thinks will be less than our Bounty. But I perceive he has some view of getting the General to take them; and I imagine we are near full. Jenkins<sup>2</sup> has brot. me two lusty able Sailors, that are willing to enlist for this Campaign, so I send them to you by him, as he was earnest to carry up two such fine fellows. Last Saturday brot. me an Accot. of a large party of Indians who in passing thro' Bedford spread themselves in smaller Companys many Miles wide and Robb'd every Plantation they came at. This provoked the Inhabitants to a great degree; Col: Talbot sent out Militia to protect them, who came up with a Party of them and seeing some of their Horses demanded restitution; but the Indians answered they must fight for them, and fired upon them, and killed one Man; whereupon they fired upon the Indians and killed some of them. But to save my writing I send you the accounts I received, having ordered a strict enquiry to be made above, by Col: Read, Colo. Talbott and Col. Maury, which when transmitted to me I purpose to send by express to Govr. Lyttleton to beg his Assistance, to prevent the disaffection of the Nation and the ill consequences that might ensue on a misrepresentation. I writ some accot. of this by Lieutt. Waller who I hope will be up this day, and I desired Colo. Mercer to communicate it to Sir John St. Clair and you and to Mr. Gist. You may assure them if our Men were the aggressors they will be severely punished and if the Indians were guilty of what is charged upon them the Wise great Men our good Friends will not blame what was done, but think they brought it upon themselves by their own folly.

I am Sir Your very humbl Servt.

JOHN BLAIR. P. S.

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I have been obliged this day to change the Militia I had ordered to garrison in Augusta, and to order 50 from Goochland and 50 from Hanover for that Service, which will unavoidably retard Majr. Lewis in joining you at Winchester which I am sorry for One of the Men I send by Jenkins whose name is Hugh Glass, says he was Armourer in the Spy Privateer of Liverpool, and Gunners Mate in the Monmouth Captn. Twentyman a Letter of Marque now here. He hopes as he is an able man 5ft:... 10In:... and used to business, some little post above the comon level (if not rather in his former employment may be bestowed upon him.

1 By reason of the great scarcity of gold and silver in Virginia at this time, the taxes, imposed for augmenting the forces in the pay of the colony, could not be collected in time to answer the purposes intended. It was therefore made lawful for the treasurer to issue treasury notes to answer the demands made upon him. Such notes were to be printed, engraved, and numbered in such form and after such method as the treasurer should judge most safe from counterfeits and forgeries; and were to be signed by Peyton Randolph and Robert Carter Nicholas, each of whom were to receive the sum of twenty shillings for every thousand notes by him signed and delivered to the treasurer. In September of this year William Prentis, James Cocke, and Thomas Everhard, gentlemen, were appointed commissioners to examine, state, and settle such accounts as should be referred to them by the governor or commander-in-chief. Benjamin Waller, Philip Johnson, and Edmund Pendleton were added to the signers of notes, and John Palmer and George Davenport were appointed to overlook the press during the time of the printing of the notes.

2 Jenkins, the indefatigable bearer of dispatches on the "express" between Washington and Williamsburg, deserves more than passing notice. Among Washington's accounts for this period are many items paid by Washington to William Jenkins by order of Governor Dinwiddie and President Blair in recognition of his services.